



Vital Connections

2019-2020

Summer 1999

The newsletter for alumni and friends of the Faculty of Nursing, University of Toronto

1 CRESSY, 2 CRESSY, 3 CRESSY, 4 ...

and counting. On April 13, 1999, five Faculty of Nursing students were honoured with Gordon Cressy Student Leadership Awards at The Great Hall at Hart House. These soon-to-be nurses were recognized with 128 other students in their final year of studies from across the University of Toronto. Gordon Cressy himself was on hand to read the citations for the Award-winning students, who received their personalized, framed certificates from J. Robert S. Prichard, President of University of Toronto, and Marta Escedi, President of the University of Toronto Alumni Association (UTAA).

As a member of many committees, **Meredith Allin** has provided a strong voice for nursing students in areas such as the selection of a new dean and faculty policy development. Meredith is Vice-President of the Canadian Nursing Students' Association and served as the 1997 President of the Nursing Undergraduate Society. She is involved in a number of initiatives promoting the health and well-being of students, her work as a leader of the Student Health Outreach Group being a prime example.

As Social and Spiritual Representative of the Nursing Undergraduate Society, **Sherri Hill** helps students understand the role of spirituality in healing. Her activities as an Anishnawbe Health street patrol volunteer, together with her work on the UofT Lectureship Series on Aboriginal Wellness and Healing, have helped promote a positive relationship



Sherri Hill, Meredith Allin, Riffaat Mamdani and Mellanie Kant

between the University of Toronto and the native community.

Whether through athletics, student government or volunteer service in the health field, **Mellanie Kant** strives to make a difference. She is a peer counsellor and educator with the Student Health Outreach program and makes health-related presentations to various UofT student groups. As Social Director of the Nursing Undergraduate Society and Chair of the Orientation Committee, Mellanie has represented her nursing peers at national, provincial and local meetings. She also enjoys playing intramural volleyball and lacrosse.

As the 1996-97 student delegate to the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, **Sanna Laitinen** organized and hosted RNAO-UofT Day. Valued for her

enthusiasm and unassuming manner, she also helped plan UofT Career Day for Nursing '97 with alumni and assisted with a career development workshop. Sanna has served as Vice-President of the Nursing Undergraduate Society and this year she is Chair of the Faculty's GRADitude campaign.

Riffaat Mamdani is tirelessly committed to making a difference in all dimensions of student and community life. As a training co-ordinator with Media Youth Link, she designed and implemented a leadership training program for Toronto youth with underserved backgrounds. She has helped organize a women's health community outreach program and was a student volunteer on Research Day. Riffaat has also volunteered in a rural community in Guyana as part of Youth Challenge International.

Dean's Message: Change, You Say?

As I reflect on the last 11 years, the theme that is inescapable throughout is change. This is not unexpected: nursing has been subject to enormous change, as has the health care system and the University over the last decade. The Faculty of Nursing could not have escaped these changes even if we had tried.

Change in Expectations

In 1988, the possibility of actually requiring a BScN as entry to practice, of licensing primary care nurse practitioners and creating the role of acute care nurse practitioners, of closing and merging many of the longest-standing and most well-established hospitals, of having chairs for nurse researchers, of having to actively recruit students into nursing to fill classes, of taking 15% out of the University's budget in one swift cut, and of having a nursing shortage, a job shortage for nurses and another nursing shortage within the next 11 years seemed improbable if not impossible. Yet all these things happened and they have profoundly influenced the Faculty, the University, the health care system and society.

Changes in Programs

One of the greatest impacts change has had is on the programs the Faculty offers. In 1988, our largest program was the 4-year BScN. Now we are close to having phased it out and replaced it with a 2-year, second entry BScN. The first class of students will graduate from this new program at Fall Convocation 1999. We admitted about 30 students a year into our MScN program, all full-time. Since then we dropped the N from the degree designation, and then stopped admitting students to the program entirely as we replaced it with an MN to which we admit about 90 students a year, the majority of whom are part-time. Our first PhD student graduated at Fall Convocation 1998 and three more will convocate in June.

One of most popular programs is the acute care nurse practitioner preparation, both adult and child, and we are a member of the ten-university consortium that prepares primary care nurse practitioners.

A hallmark of the Faculty over the last ten years has been our ability to respond to changes and to anticipate the need for new programs. A good example is our MN/MBA to prepare the next generation of nurse executives.

Change in Research Productivity

In 1988, the Faculty had about \$200,000 in external research funding, this year it is closer to \$2 million. The true dimensions of this increase can only be appreciated when the fact that the sources of funding for nursing research have diminished over the years and our Faculty has shrunk in size. Despite these challenges, our Faculty has more outstanding research scientists, those who are tops in their fields, than any other faculty in Canada.

Change in Resources

Given the previous description of the program changes and the changes in research productivity, it is hard to believe that we are about 25% smaller than we were in 1988. The cut to the University budget got transferred down to us and we have shrunk as a result. While our numbers got smaller, our credentials have gotten better. Most Faculty members now have PhDs or are in the latter stages of getting them. Furthermore, the standard is now increasing to expect post-doctorates as an entry credential for a Faculty position.

Change in Organization

In 1988, the Faculty had a very simple organizational structure: a dean and two chairs. Now we have a dean, an associate dean for education and one for research and program directors for each of our programs [4-year BScN, 2-year BScN, MN/MBA, ACNP (Child),

ACNP (adult)]. The structure is still relatively new but seems to be working well.

Time for Change

Change has been the theme of the last 11 years and it is now time for another change: a new dean. We need a new dean to lead us as we move into the new century and new millennium. It is hard to imagine that the next 11 years can be as fraught with change as the last 11, but not only possibly, but probably, there will be more change than ever before. The Faculty's record is good when it comes to handling change and I have no doubt that it will continue to anticipate and thrive on change.

It has been my privilege and pleasure (at least most of the time) to have been dean over the last exciting 11 years. I look forward to working with our new dean to make the Faculty better than ever.

Dorothy Pringle

Funding News Flash

On April 29, 1999, Ontario's Minister of Health announced that the Nursing Effectiveness, Utilization and Outcomes Research Unit would receive one million dollars a year for several years to undertake work on the nursing workforce and the Nursing Task Force recommendations.

The Co-Principal Investigators of the Unit are Linda-Lee O'Brien-Pallas (RN, PhD) and Andrea O. Baumann (RN, PhD). O'Brien-Pallas (7T5, 7T9) is an Associate Professor at UofT Faculty of Nursing and an Ontario Ministry of Health Career Scientist. Baumann is a Professor and Associate Dean of Health Sciences (Nursing), at McMaster University's School of Nursing in Hamilton, Ontario.

President's Message: Reflections of Thanks

Four years ago, when I first took on the role of President of the Nursing Alumni Association, I was a little hesitant and uncertain as to what was expected of me and what to expect from the role. Four years later I can say that this role has given me the chance to grow and develop, both personally and professionally.

I have had the opportunity, through the years, to work with a great group of dedicated professionals. Their commitment to their alma mater, to the students, and to nursing, fortified the Association and made my job easier. I want to thank them for their hard work and contributions to the Executive.

I would also like to thank the many students I have met for rekindling in me the enthusiasm and dreams that I first had when I was a nursing student and a new grad. In these turbulent times it was helpful to step back and remember why I chose nursing as my career.

Thanks are also due to the many people who, every year, support the Association, the Faculty and the students through their donations, by attending alumni events and through their letters and phone calls.

No Association or President is complete without someone to keep them organized and remind them of the little (and sometimes big) things that need to be done. Thanks, Francine, for keeping me, and the FNAA, on track and for all of your hard work.

Finally, I would like to thank Dean Dorothy Pringle for her support and encouragement many years ago when she first hired me as the Alumni Liaison. As she ends her term as Dean, I reflect on the many changes and innovations which she has brought to the Faculty and to nursing. She has, over the last 11 years, strengthened nursing and nursing education through change, creativity and determination.

I will remember her as a great leader, a dedicated nurse, an enthusiastic educator and an accomplished administrator.

So long and thanks for the challenges, and especially for the good times.

Agnese Bianchi

Awards News Flash

On March 3, 1999, the Faculty of Nursing held its annual Awards Reception at the Faculty Club. Approximately 52 students, from the undergraduate and graduate programs, were recognized for their academic achievements, in the company of their family, friends, fellow students, and members of the Faculty and staff.

Dr. Gail J. Mitchell (8T8), Chief Nursing Officer at Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Centre, was the guest speaker. The FNAA was proud to sponsor this special event.

Research Day News Flash

Nearly 300 nurses attended the Faculty's annual Research Day conference, held on April 28, 1999. In contrast to last year's international conference which was at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, this year's conference returned to its usual venue, the Medical Sciences Building on the U of T campus.

The FNAA sponsored the Nettie Douglas Fidler Plenary Session, which replaced the traditional keynote address. Patricia McKeever, Jean Reeder and Shirlee Sharkey spoke on the topic of "Conducting Research in Changing Practice Environments."

What is an Acute Care Nurse Practitioner?

Acute Care Nurse Practitioners (ACNPs) have been practising in Ontario for over 10 years and much longer than that in the USA. ACNPs are graduate-prepared nurses who provide advanced nursing care across the continuum of acute care services to patients and families who are acutely or critically ill. This care may be provided in a variety of settings and uses a collaborative model involving patients, families, significant others, nurses, physicians and other health team members. ACNPs are best suited to provide care to populations of patients who experience multiple, complex and interrelated health needs.

In response to the rising interest in and need for ACNPs, the University of Toronto Faculty of Nursing has introduced a new clinical option in the Master of Nursing (MN) Degree program: the Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (Adult or Child Health). This option provides students with academic and clinical preparation to become ACNPs within the context of graduate education. Course work includes Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnostic Reasoning, Pathophysiological Concepts, Pharmacotherapeutics and The Advanced Practice Role. Additionally, students complete three clinical courses focusing on their population of interest as well as the MN core courses. The Master of Nursing degree can be completed full time (four semesters) or part time.

The ACNP role is challenging and intriguing and is here to stay. This new stream of the MN program provides another professional development pathway that allows nurses to expand their knowledge and skills, develop advanced nursing competencies and remain directly involved in the care of patients and families.

Unique Centre Launched

On March 30, 1999, the Home Care Evaluation and Research Centre (HCERC) was launched at UofT. The Centre, the first of its kind in Canada, assembles a core group of internationally recognized researchers, led by two co-directors: Dr. Patricia McKeever of the Faculty of Nursing, and Dr. Peter Coyte of the Department of Health Administration in the Faculty of Medicine.

This innovative research centre will work to champion home care evaluation and policy development, foster a national network of quality home care researchers and disseminate findings broadly to all interested stakeholders.

Public and private sector partners have contributed more than \$1.2 million in infrastructure funding over the next five years. Approximately \$1 million has been raised through research granting agencies and foundations to support specific research projects. HCERC's founding donors are Baxter Corporation, Caremark Ltd., The Change Foundation, Comcare Health Services, the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario, St. Elizabeth Health Care, the Victorian Order of Nurses of Canada, and We Care Home Health Services Inc.

For more information, contact Ms. Jan Campbell, HCERC's Executive Director, at (416) 978-5627.

Editor's Message

I will be on maternity leave from mid-July, 1999, until January, 2000. As such, **Vital Connections** will next be published in the Spring of 2000. While I am away, the Alumni Association will carry on business, holding meetings, planning events, etc.

Getting a head start on your millennium reunion plans? U of T traditionally holds its campus-wide Spring Reunion events on the first Saturday in June. The Faculty will plan our event to coincide with the University's reunion weekend. If tradition holds, pencil Sunday, June 4, 2000, into your calendar for our Faculty celebration.

Please contact the alumni office if you would like assistance planning a class reunion. We can provide you with a current mailing list for your classmates (according to UofT's database) as well as draft invitations, etc. You can reach the alumni office in the following ways:

- 1) Leave a voice mail message on the alumni phone line, (416) 978-4786. Messages will be picked up and returned by alumni volunteers, Nursing Faculty or staff, as appropriate.
- 2) Mail correspondence to the FNAA President (use address shown below).
- 3) Fax correspondence to the FNAA President at (416) 978-8222.

Until next year,

Francine Cohen

New Nursing Scholarships

Recently, the provincial government announce a new awards program, the Ontario Graduate Scholarships in Science and Technology (OGSST). This is an innovative program where a donor's gift of \$50,000 endows a named, graduate-level scholarship, providing a \$15,000 student award every year in perpetuity.

The Faculty of Nursing is delighted to announce the creation of two OGSST Awards, which have been established by the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. Thank you for supporting our graduate students.

We hope to report on additional awards currently in the works in our next newsletter.

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... is published by the University of Toronto Faculty of Nursing Alumni Association. The FNAA also supports scholarships and programs for both alumni and students. These are made possible through your gifts to the University of Toronto Nursing Annual Fund. Please consider becoming an annual contributor.

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So, what are you up to? New job? Just married? Won an award or written a book or anything else that former classmates might be interested in? If so, please let us help you spread the news! Please bring us up-to-date by attaching your Alumni News and Comments to this form then mail to the address shown below and we'll try to publish it in the next newsletter.

Name _____ Maiden Name _____ Graduating Year _____
Address _____

Telephone _____

Please check off as appropriate: ☐ I would like to be the class representative for my year ☐ This is my new address
☐ I am interested in volunteering with the FNAA ☐ Attached is my News

✂ Mail to: Faculty of Nursing Alumni Association, University of Toronto, 50 St. George Street, Toronto, Ontario M5S 3H4 ✂